

Supervision is the sharing of authority and responsibility for the performance of one's official duties. Moreover, it is sharing the credit for the job well done and either taking, or, clearly assessing the blame for any shortfall in achievement.

Styles of supervision are out of style. Like leadership, good supervision is individuality in action. The good supervisor tends to rank himself, or should, on the scale of good supervisors for whom he has served or is serving as subordinate. He cannot help but "borrow pages from their books." If he can meld this configuration of supervisory values and become the walking composite of all the good supervisors he has known--without adding artificiality to his very own personality--he should be able to live with himself as a supervisor--the only true test of one's supervisory existence.

Bureaucracy, wherever found, is so constituted as to suggest that the good supervisor will evaluate his membership in the society of self-made supervisors as to understand completely that it is a self-perpetuating society that relies for replenishment upon the ranks of subordinates who aspire to become supervisors. The supervisor's supreme task, therefore, is to recognize, reward, and recommend talent when it is thrust upon him. If real talent is forced to stagnate for lack of supervisory insight and challenge, the loss is compounded all the way up the line.

Supervision is first and last communication--clear-cut instruction and delineation of expectations, and a continuous supervisor-to-subordinate critique of

the shortfall, excesses, surprises, blockages, and blackouts that are bound to break into the best-laid patterns of two-way communication.

With supervisory maturity comes the added responsibility of not stepping "out of character." Subordinates, like children, must be able to fix their own attention and aspirations on a continuity and consistency of direction.